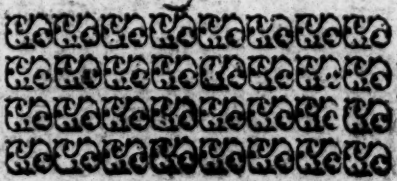


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A N
ESSAY
FOR
PROMOTING
OF
PSALMODY.

By
NAHUM  *GAGE 119*
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AN
ESSAY

FOR

PROMOTING



PSALMODY.

By
JOHN
WILKINSON
ESQ.
OF
LONDON

LONDON

Printed for J. Johnson, and sold by
all the Booksellers in London.

T O

Her Sacred Majesty,

ANNE,

Queen of Great Britain, &c.
Defender of the Faith,

A N D

Truly Royal Patroness of Endeavours
for the Service of CHURCH and STATE,

T H I S

ESSAY

For Reviving and Promoting the Religious
Exercise of PSALMODY, is most Humbly

Address'd and Dedicated,

B Y

Her Majesty's

Most Dutiful Servant,

N. TATE,

THE SECRETARY (H.M.)

ANNALS

OF GREAT BRITAIN



Printed by the Royal Patent of the Stationers
for the Service of the Crown and State

ESSAY

on the Revival and Progress of the Religion
of the People of the East

Addressed to the Hon. the Secretary

of the Admiralty

by

John G. ...

THE PREFACE.

TO see this fairest Daughter of Devotion, and Darling of Protestants beyond Sea, so Slighted amongst Us, is not much for Our Credit; Our great Decay in Piety, and Growth in Profaneness, having been imputed, by Eminent Divines, (in no small Measure) to our Neglect of, and bad Performance in PSALMODY.

Poets plead License to say strange Things; and Philosophers ere now have Argu'd Snow was Black; but is any Profession priviledg'd to call GOOD EVIL? As such it seems to be to speak against
Sing-

The PREFACE.

Singing, or Teaching to Sing the Divine Praises.

*Will Harmony in Our Voices, fright
Grace from Our Hearts; and Singing
out of Tune, make Melody to the Lord?
Are Good Verse and Tunes a Prejudice
to PSALMODY? And is maiming Her in
Both Wings, the Way to make Her Mount?
For thus has She been Wounded in the
House of Her Friends.*

*Yet, in these Days of Her Distress,
some choice Spirits have dar'd to speak
in Her Praise: And, as Longinus is
Admir'd for Writing sublimely upon Lof-
tiness, and being every where an Ex-
ample to his Rules; not less surprizing-
ly Delightful is the Harmony of Rhe-
torick and Reason, Eloquence and Ar-
gument, amongst Our Panegyrists upon
PSALMODY, so as may seem to supersede
All that I can pretend to say upon the Sub-
ject.*

Non

The PREFACE.

Non equidem Invideo, Miror magis —. Yet (as the same Virgil says) Si Quis tamen Hæc quoq; si Quis, Captus Amore leget ! For my Purpose being not so much to Praise, as to serve Her, in a humbler Sphære, (and where She has most Need) 'tis possible Her Admirers may not repent their Reading these few Sheets, when They consider, (after the Glorious Things have been said of Her) that Her Condition is still much the same as the Royal Psalmist's, when His Champions had conquer'd for Him ; but not a Word spoke (by either Tribes or Elders) of bringing the King back to his own House.

Is this Exil'd Princess yet Restor'd to her proper Seat and Splendor ? And are there any likelier Means than a Diligent Enquiry into the Occasions of Her Misfortune, and Obstacles to Her Return ?

'Twas

The PREFACE.

'Twas on This Account that several Persons of Great Judgment and Dignity were pleas'd to peruse the Manuscript, and to Advise the Printing of This Essay, as Proposing proper Ways and Means for Furnishing This Part of Our Sanctuary, so Uniform and Beautiful in All the Rest ; in which Sacred Work I should prefer any Under-Service to the Applauses of a Theatre, and other Patroniz'd Provinces of Profane Wit.

I make no Apology for mentioning PSALMODY as a Person, a Princess, and Beauty, as Solomon speaks of Wisdom, Plato of Vertue, Classick Poets of the Graces : Nor for citing such Poets on Occasion, for which St. Paul has set a Precedent : Nor for not confining Her to the Single Province of Psalm-Singing, but likewise including Hymns and Spiritual Songs, and All Harmonious Ways of Celebrating the Divine Praises.

And

The PREFACE.

And altho' my chief Purpose was to touch upon what was Undiscover'd (at least Undescrib'd) by Others, yet the Service Obliging Me sometimes to step into Their Territories, Our Abler Advocates of PSALMODY will pardon my Inserting into my Garland a few Flowers from Their Garden, upon fair Acknowledgment of the Obligation.

But if Any shall Challenge Me as Acting on Secular Interest, I don't think a Preface the proper Place to Answer in; but promise 'em Satisfaction before We part.

And should I only Challenge Them to suffer as much for the Cause, They'd soon drop their Censure, and allow my Design in these Papers to be what the Title-page pretends, For the Promoting of PSALMODY, and having This Queen (of Praise) brought in a Rayment of Needle-Work

B

by

The PREFACE.

* *Good Me-
tre and Mu-
sic.* by the * Virgins her Com-
panions, with Singing and
Rejoycing, into her Hea-
venly King's Palaces.

But if any shall Challenge Me as Ad-
ding to Secular Interests, I don't think a
NA in the proper Place to Answer in;
but promise 'em Satisfaction before We
part.

~~I should I only Challenge them to~~
suffer as much for the Cause, They'd soon
drop their Censure, and allow my Design
in these Papers to be what the Title-page
pretends, For the Promoting of Peace-
mony, and having This Queen (of Peace)
brought in a Rayment of Needle-Work
B

ESSAY

For Promoting of

PSALMODY.

CHAP. I.

A Compendious Character of the Book of
PSALMS.

METRE and MUSICK being but the Wings of Devotion, and the Sacred Text it self the Body and Substance, it seem'd Expedient to begin This Treatise of Psalmody with some Account of the *Psalter* or Psalms-Book, which is the Subject of all Our Metre-Versions.

The *Book of Psalms*, like other Volumes of Holy Scripture, was given by Inspiration,

and has withal peculiar Properties to recommend it, being

1st. A Compendiary of the Scriptures, comprising Laws, Precepts, Precedents, Politicks, Proverbs, Parables, Prophecies, and under Them, Christ, and the Gospel; and was therefore call'd the Lesser Bible, or Epitome of Holy Scriptures; so that he that reads This, (says St. *Austin*) reads All; and He that understands This, has the Master-Key to all the Rest.

2dly. 'Tis the Anatomy of the Soul, Discovering its inmost Sentiments; wherein all its Affections, Grievs, Joys, Hopes, Fears, Doubts, Cares, Anxieties, are so sensibly touch'd, as to make Us think Our selves to be the Parties concern'd, the Penitents in the Penitential, the Petitioners in those of Prayer, the joyful Addressors in those of Praise and Thanksgiving.

3dly. 'Tis the Soul's Divinity-School, and Directory of our Duties, to God, Ourselves, and our Neighbours, the Seat of Religious Discipline, to mortify the Proud, advance the Humble, inform the Ignorant, and improve the Skilful.

4thly. 'Tis the Soul's Dispensary of Medicines for all its Maladies; Lenitives for tender Wounds, and Corrosives for Inveterate, Cures for the Infected, Preservatives for the Sound,

Sound Cordials for the Feeble, Restoratives for the Relaps'd.

5thly. 'Tis a Treasury and Magazine of Accommodations for all Circumstances of Life, (*viz.*) Sicknes, Health, Youth, Age, Day, Night, Plenty, Poverty, Safety, Danger, Peace, War, Society, Solitude, Liberty, Exile, Land, and Sea.

6thly. 'Tis an Infallible Oracle to be Consulted in all Cases, and by all Sorts of Persons, Princes, Priests, Magistrates, People, Families, and Particular Persons.

7thly. 'Tis a Compleat OEconomy of the Church Catholick, Connecting the Jewish and Christian, Militant and Triumphant, being a Common Oratory of Prayers, Praises, and Thanksgivings, and by that Means keeping up the Correspondence between Men and Angels, Earth and Heaven.

8thly. 'Tis a Prospect of Nature, and Mirror of the Universe; being a beautiful Display of Animals, Elements, Earth, Seas, Skies, the Corporeal and Incorporeal World, Ascending from the Creature to the Creator, his Attributes and Perfections.

9thly. 'Tis the Soul's PARADISE of Spiritual Recreations, affording the Sweetest Refreshment after Bodily Labour, and Severer Exercises of Religious Duties; recruiting our Exhausted Spirits with fresh Supplies of Devotion, giving Wings to Praise, Fervency to Prayer,

Prayer, by all the resistless Charms of Divine Rhetorick, and Seraphick Eloquence. For, 10
 10thly. There can be nothing more charming than the Agreeable Varieties of Style, amongst the Pen-men of these Sacred Songs, (*viz.*) From the Majestick, Sublime, Magnificent, Triumphant, Exultory, down to the Mournful, Condoling, Commiserating, Pathetical, and Expostulatory; All Adapted to their respective Subjects, in which consists the very Artifice and Soul of Poetry; Yet so far from being Imitated by most of our Metre Translators, that they seem not to have had so much as a Notion of this Matter, keeping All upon a Level, without Distinction of the Different Passions, so remarkable in the Original; which Way of Rendering them may be call'd Transforming, but by no Means TRANSLATING of the PSALMS.

But Adjourning This Argument to a farther Occasion, I shall only say at present, that if Truth and Reason shall declare Against me, I shall gladly Submit to their Verdict; but 'till Then, I shall think it my Duty not to desert Them.

In the Mean Time, I humbly offer this brief Memorial of Matters Contain'd in the Book of Psalms, as a General Directory, 'till my Compleating of a Table in a new and ready Method for finding Particular Psalms, and Portions of Psalms for all Occasions, o
 Churches,

Churches, Families, and Closets ; for the Having this rich Province exactly Delineated and Mark'd out, will be a Great Accommodation to PSALMODY, whatever Metre-Version is made Use of.

C H A P. II.

Of the Usefulness and Good Effects of PSALMODY.

Divine Musick Commenc'd with the Creation, and, in succeeding Ages, has been Honour'd with Signals of Divine Approbation : The *Israelites* sang in the Wilderness, and the Water-Spring Open'd ; The Priests and *Levites* Sang Praise in the Temple, and the Glory of the Lord fill'd the House ; *Jehosopbat* March'd his Army Singing, and return'd Triumphant, his Enemies having Slain One Another. In the Infancy of the Christian Church, *Paul* and *Silas* Sung at Midnight in Prison, the Foundations shook, the Prison-Doors Open'd, the Prisoners Bands were Loos'd, and the Jayler was Converted. Here (says an Ingenious Remarker) were Song in the *Night* without a *Furige*, and Stones Mov'd by Musick, without

out a *Fiction*. In Later and Corrupted Times of Christianity, She was (in great Measure) Psalm-sung into Reformation: Nor has any Thing more conduc'd to fix the Reform'd Religion.

If You ask what Wonders this Charmer has wrought in Our own Age and Country, we have Instances that (under so General a Corruption of Manners, and Deluge of Profaneness) may pass, if not for Miracles, yet at least subservient to the great Design of Miracles, *viz.* the Advancement of Piety where She had any Footing left, and Revival of Religion where She seem'd to be expir'd: But This indeed must be understood where PSALMODY her self has been Reviv'd and Improv'd to some Degree.

A worthy * Divine, who, amongst his other pious Endeavours, has express'd no small Zeal and Skill in Recommending and Promoting This Religious Exercise, has assur'd Us, 'That thro' the Fondness of People for 'Psalm-Singing, many have recover'd their 'Reading, which they had almost forgot, 'and many have learn'd to Read, for the Sake 'of Singing Psalms, where it has been pra- 'ctis'd to some Advantage in the Perfor- 'mance.

'Tis likewise certain, that in his own Country-Parish, the Young Men that us'd
to

to loiter in the Church-Yard, or saunter about the Neighbouring Grounds, and not come into the Church 'till the Divine Service was over; upon his ordering a Psalm to be sung before Prayers began, they came flocking into the Church, where, by this Means, he had 'em present both at the Prayers and Preaching.

To this, we may add the Testimony of a worthy Minister, written to the Reverend Dr. *Woodward*.

‘ When I first came to my Parish, I found,
 ‘ to my great Grief, the People very Ignorant
 ‘ and Irreligious; the Place of Divine Wor-
 ‘ ship indecently kept; the Publick Service
 ‘ neither understood, nor attended; the Mi-
 ‘ nistration of the Lord’s Supper supported
 ‘ only by the Piety of three or four Commu-
 ‘ nicants, and the Divine Ordinance of Singing
 ‘ Psalms almost laid aside. Now, whilst I con-
 ‘ sider’d by what Means I might redress this
 ‘ General Neglect of Religion, I was of Opi-
 ‘ nion, that the setting up of such a Religious
 ‘ Society, as I had known in the City of
 ‘ *London*, would be very proper, but I fear’d
 ‘ it would be impracticable in the Country;
 ‘ so that at first, I began to teach three or
 ‘ four Youths the Skill of Singing Psalms
 ‘ Orderly, and according to Rules, which
 ‘ greatly tended, through the Grace of God,

' to awaken their Affections towards Religi-
 ' on, and to give 'em a Relish of it. The
 ' Improvement of These in Psalm-Singing,
 ' being soon observ'd by Others, many Young
 ' Men desir'd to be admitted to the same In-
 ' struction, which being Granted, and the
 ' Number of them increasing daily ; they
 ' readily submitted to the Rules of a Religious
 ' Society, and have ever since been careful
 ' Observers of 'em. By whose Means, a Ge-
 ' neral Reviving of Piety, and a Solemn Ob-
 ' servance of the publick Ordinances of God,
 ' hath been produc'd amongst Us. So that a
 ' great Number of poor Children are now
 ' kept at School by their Charity, who are
 ' carefully Catechiz'd ; and many pious
 ' Books given to Children and others. And
 ' to the Joy of all pious Souls, Our Shep-
 ' herds, Plough-men, and other Labourers,
 ' at their Work, perfume the Air with the
 ' Melodious Singing of Psalm.

'Twas by the same pious Artifice, that the
 Divine *Herbert* rais'd his Honest Farmers
 to those elevated Degrees of Piety, for which
 the Memory both of himself, and his Parish-
 oners will be for ever sweet. It is commonly
 known, that at the Ringing of a Bell, they
 would leave **their Ploughs**, and come to
 Church. Perhaps this other Truth is not
 so well known, That those who could not
 come without extraordinary Inconvenience,
 would

would take the same Signal of the Bell, to sing in the Field a Psalm or Hymn to their Creator and Redeemer.

The same Proofs of its Efficacy, are still found, where 'tis decently and frequently practis'd, according to the Just Remark of the fore-cited Doctor, ' That every one may observe, That in Churches where Psalms are best and ofteneft Sung, those Churches are always best fill'd.

I may add, the concurring Evidences of All Endeavourers for the Reformation of Manners, That they have found no Methods more effectual for reviving a lively Sense of Religion, than the Practice of Psalmody, not only in this Kingdom, but in Neighbouring Countries.

But having sufficiently prov'd the Matter of Fact, and the great Benefits produc'd by this pious Exercise, I shall proceed to the Grounds and Occasions of the Contempt and Decay of Psalmody, humbly conceiving a diligent Enquiry how This Cœlestial Beauty, so Celebrated by All the Reform'd Churches Abroad, came to sink into so low Esteem in Ours, to be a Matter of no small Importance, because absolutely Necessary towards the Redressing of so scandalous an Abuse; and in Order to my giving a just Account of these Particulars, I consulted the most proper Persons, who, besides hearty Zeal for

the Cause, had the best Opportunities of Assisting in the Discovery.

C H A P. III.

Occasions of the Decay of PSALMODY.

WHo'd suspect that One Grievance of PSALMODY, could be Want of Countenance from our QUALITY and GENTRY, not only at their own Houses, (where she has lost her Acquaintance) but likewise in Places of publick Worship? You may hear them in the Responses and Reading-Psalms, but the giving out a Singing-Psalm, seems to strike 'em dumb.

Would not any Foreigner, coming into our Churches, think the Clerk's Call to sing to the Praise and Glory of God, (that sure Charm to raise the Hearts and Voices of the People) were, to Persons of High Rank, a Signal for a Cessation of Devotion? Would not he wonder at their leaving to Inferiors the sole Exercise of a Duty so Delightful, Generous, and every Way fit for Persons of the Best Degree, to be Leaders in the Service? What Daughter of Devotion has so noble an Appearance? For, while

PRAYER,

PRAYER, *as for Alms, does at the Portal wait,*
 PRAISE *enters, like a Royal Guest, in State.*

When is it that our Noble Frequenters of the Almighty's Courts, make the Greatest Figures; Petitioning for Favours, or Presenting their Oblations of Respect and Honour? For *whoso offers Praise, Honours Him.* Psal. 50. ult.

With what Elevation of Spirit does the Psalmist start from the Vale of Tears and Supplication, to the Paradise of Praise! The Daughters of the Temple are all of Heavenly Race, *Omnes Cœlicolæ*, but not *Omnes Supera Alta tenentes*: The *Fastigia Cœli* are the Prerogative of PSALMODY. How different is the Stile of their Addresses! *Be Merciful to Me, for I have Sinn'd*, says PÆNITENCE: *From the Ends of the Earth, and out of the Deeps, have I cry'd*, says PRAYER: *O'be joyful in the Lord, come before his Prasence with a Song, &c.* This is the Language of Praise. Accordingly *some also of our Own Poets*;

*For PRAYER the Ocean is where Diversely;
 Men steer their Course, each to a diff'rent Coast,
 Where oft our Int'rests so Discordant be,
 That Half beg Winds by which the Rest are
 Lost.* Sir W. D.

But,

But

PRAISE is Devotion fit for *Mighty Minds* ;
The Diff'ring World's Agreeing Sacrifice, &c.

Nor only the *Common* Sacrifice of Rational Beings, but so just a Tribute to the Almighty, that Inferior Creatures, Elements, and the whole Universe, are summon'd to pay it. *Psal. 148.*

And for its being Devotion fit for *Mighty Minds*, if You doubt a Poet's Word, take a Preacher's. ' Singing the Praises of GOD, is ' the Noblest Part of Worship. — The most ' Generous Service that we can perform ; and ' carries with it the Liveliest Signatures of a ' *Divine* and *God-like* Temper of MIND. Thus the practical Discourser, and what can a Poet say more ?

But still this *Præference* to Other Religious Duties must be Understood in some *Certain* Respects, not in Every Respect : And We acknowledge each of the Fair Competitors to be a Princess and Sovereign in her Own Province : Yet PSALMODY, in her sublimest Exercise, (that of Celebrating the Divine Attributes and Perfections) appears with the Grandeur of an Empress.

In sacred Heraldry, she has the Ascendant, as being of the Eldest House, and early as the Creation, *when the Morning Stars sang together ;*

together ; and of a Lineage that will Last
when Time shall be Extinct.

*For when to the Cœlestial Temple come,
PETITION There shall Cease, and PRAY'R be
Dumb :*

*But PRAISE, in Accents more sublime and strong,
Shall Then Commence her Everlasting Song.*

She's then so far from being Despicable,
that She seems to be the **QUALITY-DUTY** ;
and for such to Claim Her as their Priviledge,
as having the Nearest and most Familiar Ac-
cess to the Presence of the *Most High*.

How comes it then to pass that so Few a-
bove Ordinary Rank, Vouchsafe to join in
This Part of Divine Worship ? 'Tis not
Want of Devotion, of which They express
so Religious a Sense in Other Parts of the
Service, and Best know how to Demean
Themselves in all Placcs ?

But Here We are Answer'd with Another
Question ; Is There not a Cause ? And in-
deed, if by Cause be meant Occasion, must
acknowledge More than *One* ; therefore, since
Silence amongst Persons of Quality and Gen-
try, is a Disparagement to **PSALMODY**, and
their Honouring Her with their Voices,
would be a Means of Raising Her Reputation,
an Enquiry into those Occasions, is Neces-
sary.

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Metre-Part of PSALMODY.

METRE and Musick being the principal Parts of PSALMODY, her Credit and Esteem, with the Better Sort of People, must Rise or Sink according as She's supported in These two Provinces : For can we suppose our Persons of Quality and Gentry (arriv'd to the nicest Taste of Verse, and Accustom'd to the politest Poetry on Other Occasions) will ever be brought to sing in Divine Worship, what makes sensible People smile to hear a Clerk read ? And how PSALMODY is Accommodated with Metre in our *Old* Version, I think common Sense sufficient to determine : But This being a Tender Point with some, (and what may seem Invidious in Me) I shall appeal to Eminent *Divines* of our Church, and content my self with laying before the Reader a Few of their Many Remonstrances concerning This Matter ; and First,

The Sentiments of Arch-Bishop *Usher*.

‘ That the Singing-Psalms, either for the
 ‘ Lameness of the Rhimes, or superfluous
 ‘ Words, as, I say’s, for why’s, &c. Homely
 ‘ Phrases, as, Feed Them with Brown Bread,
 ‘ Take thy Hand out of thy Lap, Mend this
 ‘ Geer,

‘ Geer, and the Like, maybe Corrected, or at
 ‘ least a better Translation of the Psalms in
 ‘ Metre Appointed, instead of This Old.

Sanderfon's History of King Charles the Ist,
 pag. 365.

Our present Lord * Bishop of * *Letter to*
London has Sufficiently, though *the Clergy of*
 Modestly, hinted the same Need *his Diocese.*
 of a New and *Better* Version,
Viz. ‘ Such as may remove the Unhappy
 ‘ *Objection* that has hitherto lain again against
 ‘ the Singing-Psalms, and dispose that Part
 ‘ of Divine Worship to much more Devo-
 ‘ tion.

Accordingly the Bishop of † † *Hist. of*
Salisbury has Tenderly told Us, *the Reform.*
 ‘ That as the Poetry was then
 ‘ Low, This Work, that might then pass for
 ‘ a Tolerable Composure, having not been
 ‘ since that Time so Review'd and Chang'd
 ‘ as the Thing requir'd; Hence it is, that
 This Part of Divine Worship, by the Mean-
 ness of the Verse, has not preserv'd its due
 Esteem.

And before Him, || Dr. *Hey-* || *Hist. of*
lin (with more Freedom) having *Reform.*
 Mention'd the *French* Version
 of *Marot*, said by *Strada* to be ignorantly
 and perversly done, adds, That it was not to
 be Compar'd with that Barbarity and Botch-

ing that every where occurs in the Translation of *Sternhold* and *Hopkins*.

And before Him, Dr. *Donne*, Dean of St. *Paul's*, ' That He could scarce call our ' Church Reform'd, 'till This was Reform'd.

These Instances (having been the General Sense of our Learned Clergy, and other judicious Persons) are Sufficient, and more than I was willing to Mention, had not This Metre-Part of *Psalmody* been of the Greatest Importance to my Subject. I am next to consider what the Advocates of the Old Version have Offer'd in its Behalf.

What, (say Some) must the Whole be laid aside for a few *Obsolete* Words?

Words indeed are (as *Horace* says) the Creatures of Custom, to be Cashier'd and Recall'd into Service at Pleasure. But what if the Question is not concerning Words, but Expressions and Sentences, and Those in Terms as Intelligible and Familiar Now, as They were Then? Teeth, Jaw-Bones, Lyons Whelps, are Words Understood by every Body, but thus put together, — Whose Teeth, within their great Jaw-Bones, like Lyons Whelps, hang Out, want an *Œdipus* to Unriddle 'em: A Child knows what you mean by a Day and for Ever; but — *for Ever and Day*, i. e. a Day beyond Eternity, is a Figure of Speech for which Rhetorick has no Name.

Others

Others say 'twas well meant, and has done Service, and moreover was good Poetry for the Time.

But 'tis not the Meaning, but Metre, not the Time, but Performance, that are now to take Place, since, by *the Meanness of the Verse*, this Part of Divine Worship has lost *its Due Esteem*. Good Service it has done, and had the Verse been better, had done more in its own Day. If Poetry Then was Low, shew me where so low as in this Channel, and I'll shew where it ran as * High Stream, as any in Our Time.

But there's a Plea left, and such as (if it holds) will go far in carrying the Cause : 'Tis affirm'd by some Persons, to come Near-est to the Original of All that have been done. This indeed is very Civil and Respectful to that Translation, but what others will think no Great Complement to the Original, if another Arch-Bishop Answer'd Right, on a Complaint of the poor Sense sometimes met with in that Version ; I'm afraid (said He) That's not the Worst of it, but that 'tis in some Places no Sense at All.

D 2

Are

* *Sir J. Davis on the Soul, a Poem of as Sublime Thought, Elegant Expression, and Graceful Turn of Verse as Any in Our Age ; which I found Bury'd under Rubbish, and is now Printed for Mr. Rogers, at the Sun in Fleet-street.*

Are the fore-cited *Lamenefs of the Rhimes, Superfluous Words, Homely Phrases, Meanness of the Verse, Barbarity and Botching*, (said *every where* to Occur in that Translation) Characteristicks of the Sacred Text? 'Tis Odds but the Friends of the Original, and Acquainted with its Beauties, will look for nearer *Likeness* than such a Copy.

Can Copyings after Great Masters, without something of their *Manner*, be Acceptable to Quality and Gentry? Will coarse *Likeness*, without Spirit, be sufficient to præfer 'em to the Gallery and Closet? Yet, by prejudic'd Judgments, the least Air of Poetry in Psalm-Metre shall be Censur'd as a Crime; What is *Lively* and *Graceful*, shall be call'd *Light* and *Airy*; *Barbarity* and *Botching* have the Venerable Appellation of *Grave* and *Solid*. I hope 'tis no Offence to ask the Reader, if Three or Four plain Words to this Point, by his present Grace of *Canterbury*, viz. *DAVID* was a Great POET, would not take as many Volumes to Answer 'em?

After all, (to shew that I speak not for Self-Interest) let the principal Persons of Our Church and State, who were pleas'd to approve and allow the Use of that Version wherein I was Concern'd, be satisfy'd that a more serviceable Performance is produc'd, and I shall think my self Happy in having
help'd

help'd to make Way for such a Version: Let Our Churches be Accommodated to Satisfaction, and my Ambition's Answer'd.

And I am at this Time more than Ordinarily solicitous for a Favourable Reception of such a Version, on the Probability of Our having such a Version, the Relict and last Effort of no less a Man than Our Famous Sir *John Denham*; which, if it comes up to the Character of the Author, 'tis Likely that PSALMODY may clap her Wings, and have no Occasion to look Out any farther.

I had not the Opportunity of perusing the Copy, (which I hear is now in the Press) but in Respect to so great a Name, I inform'd the worthy Gentleman who had Possession of the Manuscript, (as dear Experience had taught me) the Impediments and Oppositions that such a Work must meet withal, and the most proper Methods of Securing it a free Passage into the World, and fair Usage when it came Abroad.

Therefore, for the Sake of This, or any Other good Performance that may Hereafter be Offer'd, I think my self Oblig'd on this Opportunity to give some publick Account of the Difficulties and Prejudices that all such Endeavours must Encounter; and to which the Best that can be perform'd, if Design'd for publick Use, will be inevitably Expos'd. This Timely Warning, (and more
of

of it upon Occasion) I take to be a Service to PSALMODY, that has Hitherto lain Unmention'd.

C H A P. V.

Several Prejudices, &c. against a New Metre-Version.

YOU must expect the first Out-cry against any new Version of Psalms, from the Ignorance amongst some of our Common People, who, because they find the Old Singing-Psalms bound up with their Bibles, take it for Granted that those *English* Metres, as well as the Matter, were compil'd by King *David*: Nay, some have suppos'd a Greater Person was the Composer of those Metres; for Instance, the Late Bishop of *Ely*, upon his first using of his Brother Dr. *Patrick's* New Version in his Family-Devotion, Observ'd (as I heard Himself relate the Passage) that a Servant-Maid of a Musical Voice, was silent for several Days together. He ask'd her the Reason, whether she were not well, or had a Cold? Adding, that He was much delighted to hear her, because she sang sweetly, and kept the Rest in Tune. I

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am well enough in Health, answer'd she, and have no Cold; but, if you must needs know the plain Truth of the Matter, as long as You sung Jesus Christ's Psalms, I sung along with Ye; but now You sing Psalms of Your Own Invention, You may sing by Your selves.

But to satisfy such Scruples, there needs no more Trouble, but to turn to the Title-Page, (as a Reverend Doctor did) and shew 'em the Translators Names.

Another Sort of Male-Contents, with a little more Sense, but less Sincerity, shall make it their Business to inveigh against any such Endeavour, as an impious Removing of the Old Land-Mark; and yet Some of 'em (I speak Matter of Fact) attempt (to their Power) the Doing of That which They call Sacrilege in their Neighbours.

And having pass'd the Pikes of Ignorance and Envy, and come to Those that can hear of a New Version, how will you comport your self to their several Sentiments about the Method of Proceeding? Some will be for having the Old Measures kept, Others for Change of the Metres; some for Double Rhimes throughout, some for no Rhimes at all, but only Prose chopt into Metre; Some for Verbal Translation, Others for Explanatory; Some for Graceful Language, Others for Homely Phrase; because, as They are
pleas'd

pleas'd to say, There are in Holy Scripture no Rhetorical or Poetical Flourishes; which Notion, if True, (as 'tis singular) will be a Discovery, not only to Novices, but to Learned Doctors and Greatest Scripturists.

That the Book of Psalms is a most admirable Piece of Poetry, are the very first Words of Dr. *Patrick's* Præface to his Paraphrase; then (as *Melanchto* truly speaks) 'tis the most Elegant Work Extant in the World.

The Learned * Dr. *Grew* has
 * *In his* Cof- prov'd the Sacred Writers the
mologia Sa- Great Originals of Poetry and
cra Eloquence; and the most Fa-
 mous of *Ethnic* Poets and Ora-
 tors, Copyers of Them, both as to Matter
 and Manner; ' That most of the Prophetic
 ' Parts of Scripture, wherein God speaks to
 ' Men, are very singular for the Elegancy,
 ' Significancy, and Majesty of the Stile;
 ' from whence more Noble Examples of all
 ' the Tropes and Figures, us'd by the best
 ' Orators, may be taken, than from any o-
 ' ther Books whatsoever. Neither is the Al-
 ' titude of their Metaphors to be equall'd by
 ' any Poet, that This one Expression of *Da-*
 ' *vid*, viz. *Who is like unto the Lord Our*
 ' *God, who humbleth Himself to behold the*
 ' *Things that are done in Heaven?* And that
 ' of the Prophet *Isaiab*, *Heaven is my Throne,*
 ' *and Earth is my Foot-stool*, are either of
 ' them

‘ them Greater than Any Thing in *Homer* and
 ‘ all the Poets put together. These Points He
 insists on for many Pages, which the Reader
 wishes as many Volumes, being so delightful
 a Scene in his beautiful Display of the Excel-
 lency of the Holy Scriptures.

Nor can We wonder at the Holy Pen-
 mens being Extraordinarily endow’d with
 These Charming Talents, considering their
 Serviceableness for promoting the pious Pur-
 poses on which They were Employ’d. The
 Prophets (says the same Author) being of
 Different Education and Temper, and Living
 in Times not always Alike, receiv’d and de-
 liver’d their Messages in as Many Kinds of
 Oratory ; being chosen in this Variety, that
 Nothing might be wanting to prevail with
 that stubborn People to whom They were
 sent. ‘ Their Message (says He) was Adorn-
 ‘ ed, for the most part, with Variety of *Me-*
 ‘ *taphors* and *Allegories*, or Mysterious Visi-
 ‘ ons ; partly, for that most People are more
 ‘ wrought upon by Similitudes, than by
 ‘ downright Truth, &c.

Accordingly Another * Oracle
 has declar’d, that Poesy serveth
 not Only to Delectation, but
 likewise to Confer Magnanimity
 and Morality ; and therefore
 seems to have something of Divineness, be-
 cause of raising the Appearances of Things to

* *Lord Ve-*
rulam’s Ad-
vancement of
Learning.

the Desires of the Mind, and not submitting the Mind to Things; and by these Allurements, cherishes the Soul of Man; but still more sweetly insinuates it self, if join'd with Musick. So the famous Critic before Him, *Nihil est autem quo Tantum Animus Noster demulceatur et gaudeat Quantum Harmonia et Numeris.* The Reason Bishop Patrick gives for his calling the Book of
 † *Præf. ut* Psalms a most Admirable Piece
Supra. of Poetry, is, † because it moves more powerfully, and touches the Mind more sensibly than Sentences in Prose.

Is't not then Double Sacrilege to take from the Temple so serviceable a Votary, and from Her, the Honour of being a Hand-maid to Devotion? And can it be a Crime for Metre-Translators of these Sacred Songs, to Endeavour at Rendering them in some Measure According to their Original Beauties? Is not an Elegant Manner of Translating these Divine Odes, as just a Debt to the Psalmist, as to any Other Poet? *Cur enim Alibi Compti, Hic Incompti; Cur Alibi Politi, Hic Polluti? Cur ceteræ Artes Humanæ et Profanæ Nitescere Sola vero sancta Scriptura Horrere debet?* were Questions long since Ask'd by our Learned Country-man, (*Laurent. Humfred. de Rat. Covertendi Authores*) And not Answer'd to this Day.

IF

If Any shall Object against this Polite and Graceful Way of Translating the PSALMS into *English* Metre, that it will put 'em Above the Capacity of the Common People; I answer, that, with *Quintilian*, and other Criticks, Perspicuity is the Principal Recommendation of a good Stile; and that amongst our Own Writers, both in Poetry and Prose, the most Celebrated for Refin'd Language, are they that have writ most Intelligibly in Both, and are as well Understood by the Country Folk, as by Citizens, or Courtiers.

But because of the different Sentiments of People, concerning This and Other Particulars, 'tis heartily wish'd that the REQUISITES to a good Metre-Version of the PSALMS, were Adjusted and Agreed upon, that the noble Cause of PSALMODY may neither Suffer by Default in the Translation, nor in the Judgment that is pass'd Upon it.

Can the Criticks desire a Nobler Field of Exercise, yet wholly Neglected by These strict Præscribers of Laws for doing Heathen Poets Justice; but have left the Royal Psalmist in Foreigners Hands, to be disguis'd in such scandalous Dresses, as the Botchers of every Country were able to put Him into.

Nor will Præscriptions in This Case, and Directing a *Certain* Course for Translators to Steer by, be so easy a Matter as 'tis imagin'd, There being so many Shelves to be Shunn'd,

so many nice Points to be Secur'd, and All in so *Narrow* a Compass, as will render This the most difficult Task a Poet can take in Hand.

The long Time Spent in Considering and Consulting, before they set into that Work, the Care and Circumspection in Doing it, the Pains of Correcting when 'tis done; Application to Superiors for their Perusal and farther Directions; Then Recommitting it to private Revival of Judicious Friends; and after All, to the Closet-Censure of their own Impartial Judgment, are some Exercise of Industry and Patience; yet through This Discipline, must a Psalms-Translator pass, before he can pretend to have discharg'd his Duty.

I crave Leave once more to ask if such a Directory of REQUISITES as I have Hinted at, would not be of singular Use in determining the Choice of a fit Mitre-Version of Psalms to be fix'd in Churches, if we have such a One; or if not, the most likely Means of Helping us to such a Version.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

Other Occasions of the Contempt and Decay of PSALMODY; with the Proper Remedies.

HAVING Remonstrated the Grievances of *Psalmody* in the Province of *Metre*, we are next to enquire how Matters have been manag'd in the Musical Part.

And first, 'Tis evident that One scandalous Abuse, and very prejudicial to this Noble Part of Religious Worship, has been the Reducing of our Psalm-Tunes to the Practice of half a Dozen, or Fewer, in some Churches; which has not only retrench'd the Agreeable Variety, in which consists the Life of Musical Performance, but possess'd People with a Mistaken Notion, as if Psalm-Singing were not capable of being made Delightful and Entertaining; and moreover, makes the Service suffer in the Religious Part; for without Variety of Tunes, how can we have the Psalms of so various Occasions, and different Passions so perform'd, as by a powerful Sympathy to Affect the Congregation with a Suitable Frame of Spirit? Must not this necessarily

cessarily break the Harmony of Mind, and make a Discord in their Devotion?

For, besides the charming Resemblance between those Twin-Cherubs of our Ark, the *Metre* and *Musick*, a Conformity in Both to the Sacred Matter that is Metred and Sung, is likewise Necessary; Otherwise, instead of Raising Our Affections, we shall Dispirit and Disparage the Service.

We are inform'd, that in *Germany*, where They have Abundance of Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, set to pleasant short Tunes, their Churches and Houses are not the only Places where this Heavenly Musick is Heard, but their Peasants at their Plough, their Children and Servants at their Labour, and when they walk in the Fields; and Generally Persons of Both Sexes, at their Diversions and Employments, make Use of These for Expressing their Mirth, and have no such Custom, as We labour under, of lewd and profane Songs.

What were our Tunes Compos'd for, but to be Sung? And why not now, as well as for an hundred Years together after the Reformation? That Protestants Abroad Sing more Tunes than We, and more in Tune too, is not Occasion'd by their having Better Tunes than Ours, but because their Hearts are more in Tune. A Great Master of *Psalmody*, as any Neighbouring Nation has bred,
Assures

Affures Us, upon his more than fifty Years Exercise and Experience, that Many of Our Old Psalm-Tunes are so Excellent, that Art cannot Mend Them, or Make Better. The same may be said of Our New Tunes, Compos'd by some of the best Musick-Masters of Our Age, and to the Approbation and Applause of the Rest ; I mean the *Supplement* to the New Version, which is Own'd by Them to be the Compleatest Piece of PSALMODY Extant in Any Nation. So that it will be a double Scandal for Us, if We Continue to be the Worst Psalm-Singers, when We are Accommodated to become the Best : For This We must reckon Another Præjudice to PSALMODY, viz. Our Unskilful and Unmusical Manner of Singing.

To allow the Practice of Singing-Psalms, and have an Indifference for a Good Performance, is, if not to common Sense and Reason, certainly a Contradiction to Religion. Hear how a Reverend Divine has pathetically and piously deliver'd Himself * on this Occasion, viz.

- * *Præf. to*
- ' As the Singing of Psalms and *Pastoral*
- ' Hymns is of the greatest Force *Disc. &c.*
- ' to raise the Passions of Divine
- ' Love, &c. So Experience shews Us, that
- ' since Our Youth, of late Years, in many
- ' Parts of this Kingdom, have learn'd to
- ' Sing Psalms by *Notes*, that They have more
- ' Duly

- Duly and Devoutly attended the House of
- God, and have taken greater Pleasure in
- the publick Worship, &c.

The Design of Church-Musick, (says Mr. * *Collyer*) is to relieve the Weariness of a long Attention, to make the Mind more Compos'd and Chearful, to endear the Offices of Religion; it should therefore imitate the *Perfume* of the *Tabernacle*, and have as little of the Composition in Common Use, as is possible. Again, Religious Harmony must be Moving, but Noble withal, Grave, Solemn, and Seraphick. It should be so Contriv'd, as to warm the best Blood within Us, and take Hold of the finest Part of Our Affections; to Transport Us with the *Beauty of Holiness*; to raise Us above the Satisfaction of Life, and make Us Ambitious of the Glories of Heaven. And is not this as Applicable to Psalm-Singing, as to Cathedral-Singing? To the Parish-Church, as to the Choir?

'Tis certain, that Harmony of the *Heart*, the Musick of the *Mind*, and the *Soul's* being in *Tune* for this pious Exercise, is that which *makes Melody to the Lord*; but what Hopes of Labouring after such a Heavenly Frame of Spirit, by Those who will not so much as take Pains and Care about the *External* Part of this Ordinance, and for a Decent

cent and Skilful Performance in That, which, altho' not the Principal, yet is an Indispensible Part of the Duty; and expected by Him who is exalted *above all Blessing and Praise*, with whom indeed Our *Best* will be Accepted, (says the *Practical Discourser*) be it never so Mean, yet Nothing less than Our *Best*, be it never so Good. And to refer the pious Reader for full Instructions in This Important Point, to that Excellent Treatise, and particularly to the Directive Part, seems sufficient for me, who Aspire no farther than to the Outward Court of this Temple.

C H A P. VII.

More Occasions of the Decay of PSALMODY.

ANother Deficiency, is the General Disuse of Psalm-Singing in Families, and after That, of Other Parts of Family-Devotion, (as indeed 'tis a certain Observation, that where-ever *Psalmody* goes to Wreck, other Exercises of Piety, and even Piety it self, sinks with Her. For is not This a necessary Part of that Family-Devotion, without which the Reverend Dr. *Tillotson* could

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not

not see how such a Family could be said to have any Religion at all.

Another Prejudice to *Psalmody*, (and almost Mortal Wound to National Religion) has been our Omission of having it Taught in Schools, as is done in all Protestant Schools beyond Sea. If the Mischievous Effects of This Neglect, and happy Consequences that would attend a National Reformation in this Matter, are not Self-evident ; we have them sufficiently set forth by the fore-cited Reverend Doctor, in these Words, ‘ That if the ‘ Singing of Psalms by Notes, was taught by ‘ Our Grammar-Schools, as Writing is, and ‘ That so as to be made a Recreation, it ‘ would be of unspeakable Benefit in the Seasoning of the Minds of Youth with a Relish ‘ of Divine Things, which by continual Conversation with profane Poetry, and no Other, go off, generally, with Præjudice to ‘ Holy Thoughts, and Holy Things.

Another Detriment to *Psalmody*, has been the Choice of unskilful Parish-Clerks : For, as a good Clerk, by Degrees, removes all Obstacles, an Insufficient Clerk not only puts a full Stop to all Improvements in *Psalmody*, but occasions a Relapse, by making the People forget the good Tunes they had learn’d, for Want of Practice ; for as the Clerk sings, so generally sings the Parish. But this being very often the Fault of the Parishioners, especially

pecially when they oppose the Minister in the Choice of a Clerk, we shall so far leave it at their Door ; and not to tire the Reader with Complaints, I shall only beg his Patience for Mentioning one more Obstacle, but such a One, as is at present the greatest Discouragement to *Psalmody*, so if it were once Remov'd, all other Inconveniencies and Obstacles (so far as Clerkship is concern'd) would fall with it ; and that is, the poor, small Encouragement allow'd for Parish-Clerks, unless it be at *London*, and some Few Places more throughout our Nation.

For, 'till competent Provision is made for All that Officiate in this Service, 'tis impossible for them to attain to such Improvements in Skill as is requisite ; and unreasonable to expect that Those who have already been at the Pains and Charge of Qualifying Themselves, will ever take up with so poor a Subsistence as is to be had in most Parishes of our Kingdom. Therefore, 'till better Maintenance is provided, we can hope for no Progress in *Psalmody*.

And as One Step to this good Design, I would humbly propose, that whatever Metre-Version of the Psalms shall be establish'd and made the National Book, that the Profits, which would then be Considerable, should be dispos'd of to the Benefit of Parish-Clerks ; because a single Mite once cast in, to Com-

mence such a Sacred Treasury, may Occasion Donations and Settlements sufficient to rescue this Noble Part of Divine Worship from Contempt. And would not All Persons that are bless'd with Wealth, and Any Will to do Good, most freely contribute to the Repairing and Beautifying This Temple of Praise.

But if Reason and Religion require competent Substinance for Parish-Clerks, who are but *Servi in Sacris*, then much more for Clergy-Men, and for Enlarging such Benefices, as are very Improperly call'd Livings.

But Leaving this Noble Cause to Abler Advocates, I shall conclude with hearty Wishes and Hopes, that upon the Return of Peace, when Sacred and Civil Rights are Secur'd, the Tranquility of *Europe* Restor'd, that then the Governors of our Church and State will be at Leisure to take this Noble Sufferer's Case into their Patronage, 'till our Churches shall charm Families into a decent and frequent Use of This Divine Exercise; and that by these Means, (and by Teaching it in Schools) it shall become the *National* Practice, and consequently a *National* Blessing; for when *our People Praise God*, when *All our People Praise Him*, then may we expect *Our Earth to bring forth Her Increase*, and *God to give Us his Blessing*; for when
Our

Our Sanctuary shall resound with the sweet Songs of *Sion*, and the Royal Psalmist's Harp is put in Tune, then shall Our Tribes March up, (with *Profelytes* in Company) and Our *Sion* be the Joy of the Whole Earth.

The CONCLUSION.

THE Sublime and Rapturous *Fortius Rhingilb. (de Rat. Stud.)* says of ELOQUENCE, *Non satis est tam Leviter Doctrinarum Principem describere ; Hac enim irritare Torpentes, Desides Animare, Sontes Damna-re, Bonos Extollere possumus.* Again, *Prode Teipsam, O Incidissima ! Sentiat Fulgorem Tenebris Immersum Mortalium Genus : Nemo TE, Nisi TU, Expressere potest.* In this Daring and Enthusiastick Manner that warm Admirer Sallies out in Praise of Eloquence, of *Ethnick* Eloquence ; and will not the Friends of PSALMODY pardon a Start of passionate Zeal and *Rhapsody* at Parting ?

AWAKE,

AWAKE, Appear, O Princess of Divine Praise ! Does not the Season Smile upon Thee ? Hark, is it not the Voice of thy Beloved that calls to Thee from Above, *and tells Thee, The Winter is Past, the Rain Gone, and the Time of SINGING Come ? Awake, my Dove, Come Away, too long ha'st Thou Slept in the Clefts of the Rocks : Let thy Beloved see Thy Countenance, let Him hear Thy Voice ; for Thy Voice it is Sweet, and thy Countenance is Comely.* (Song of Solomon.)

And don't We hear thy Responsal, Saying, *Blow Thou North Wind, and come Thou South ; blow upon my Garden, that the Spices may flow Out, that my Beloved may come to His Garden, &c.*

No, Sacred Princess, 'tis not the *Zephyrs* that can Inspire this Heavenly Flavour ; 'tis thy Coelestial Breath that Fans the Spices into Fragrancy.

O !

O! QUEEN of Sacred Harmony, how Powerful are thy Charms? Care shuns thy Walks, Fear kindles into Courage, and Joy Sublimes into *Seraphick* Extasy.

What! shall *Stage-Syrens* Sing, and PSALMODY Sleep? Theatres be Thronged, and Thy Temples Empty? Shall Thy Votaries Abroad find Heart and Voice to Sing in the fiery Furnace of Persecution, upon the Waters of Affliction, and Our *Britains* sit Sullenly Silent under Their Vines and Fig-Trees?

When Thy Musick Ceases, will not Nature be Dumb, and the Universe be Un-tun'd? Return Coelestial Charmer, Resume thy Royal Psalmist's Harp, and to the Songs of *Sion*, join the Song of the Lamb, the Carroling of Angels at the Nativity of an Infant-God; His Conquests over Death and Hell; and the Great Captain of Salvation made Perfect through Sufferings.

Then

Then shall We soar on Thy Wings
 above Mortal State; for, will not Thy
Scale of Musick be Another *Jacob's* Lad-
 der, with the Angels of God Ascend-
 ing and Descending upon it? For Thus
 may We maintain a Commerce between
 Earth and Heaven, and Commence Our
 Heaven upon Earth, since

Angels and We, *Assisted by This Art,*
 May Sing together, *tho' We dwell Apart.*

Mr. Waller.

FINIS.

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